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IMO concentrates on implementation

In a recent interview its Secretary General told MER that, while by no means less concerned with safety standards than in the past, the International Maritime Organisation was currently most active in furthering the implementation of existing conventions. Much remained to be done but the current situation of world shipping had to be taken into account.



Mr C P Srivastava, was born in India in 1920. He graduated at Lucknow, India, with 1st Class Hons in 1941, 1st MA in 1942 and LLB in 1944. From 1948-49 he was Under Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce. After a spell as City Magistrate at Lucknow and Meerut, he joined the Directorate of Shipping in 1953 and became Deputy Director-General in 1954. He held this and other civil service appointments until, from 1966-73, he became Chairman and MD of the Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. From 1967-73 he was also Chairman of Mogul Line Ltd, and from 1972-73 a Director of the Reserve Bank of India. Since 1974 he has been Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization. Among his very numerous honorary appointments are Chancellor of the World Maritime University, and board member of the International Chamber of Commerce. His even more numerous honours include Hon Member, Inst of Marine Technologists, India, FRSA, UK, Commandeur du Merite Maritime, France, Cmder of the Order of Saint Olav, Norway, Nautical Medal, First Class, Greece. His recreations are music, tennis and reading.

MER First, could I ask you what you consider are IMO's greatest achievements so far?

SRIVASTAVA I personally attach the greatest importance to IMO's convention on maritime training: that I think it is a major contribution to safety and pollution prevention. No matter how many standard rules you have, if those who are called upon to observe them are not trained, you cannot ensure safety.

MER Looking back, has IMO had a failure which you think particularly damaging?

SRIVASTAVA It would not be proper for me to say that everything has been successful but it is difficult to pinpoint where we have failed. By the end of the year, for instance, I hope to be able to say that nearly every IMO convention of any substance is already part of international maritime law.

MER There isn't one which has failed? What about, for instance, the one on compensation for chemical tanker disasters?

SRIVASTAVA It was not a failure of IMO but of a diplomatic effort. The recent conference succeeded in improving the limits of liability on two previous conventions for oil tankers. There was a third item on the agenda, namely the draft convention on the carriage of noxious substances. The reason for its postponement was that the issues were perhaps too many. The conference itself decided that IMO should now undertake further studies to reduce the gap between the two points of view.

MER Do you have any statistics, for instance on the saving of life, which show that a certain IMO convention has been successful?

SRIVASTAVA Well I will give you two examples. One, if you look at the casualty statistics related to traffic in the English Channel, I believe the rate of accidents has come down to less than half of what it used to be 18 years ago, thanks to our traffic separation scheme.

The second example is that of pollution, caused by the operation of ships. (I am not talking of accidental pollution by incidents everyone knows about.) With our 1954 Oil Pollution convention, as amended in 1969, in force, complaints about pollution of the beaches have dropped considerably. It has been calculated that the incidence is now less than half of what it used to be: possibly a third. But we can do better than this, especially following the entry into force last November of the 1973/78 MARPOL Convention.

I will give you another example. I went to Turkey at the invitation of their Government and they took me to one of their

ports where the annual loading rate was something like 25 M tonnes. I found the water around the tanker terminal beautifully clean. They had established reception facilities for 50% of ballast water in which they invested something like \$5M. Oil is separated from water and they are able to recover practically half the first cost within two years by selling the oil.

MER But are you satisfied with the shore reception facilities available world-wide? There are a great many complaints that there are far too few.

SRIVASTAVA I think you are right, I cannot honestly say that I am satisfied. A great deal needs to be done by member states and we are assisting by way of studies and advice. We have no money to invest and no way to force them. But we are not just sitting back, we have appointed experts and recommendations have been made. And a seminar on the subject was held in August at IMO headquarters.

MER If I might change the subject, how have you avoided overlapping with other agencies, for instance, UNCTAD and ILO?

SRIVASTAVA It is a problem and not one that is easily resolved. But over the years it has been my endeavour to negotiate with UNCTAD, ILO, and UNEP about a reasonably clear demarcation of our respective responsibilities. We have a written agreement with UNCTAD which provides that they deal only with the commercial aspects of shipping.

Our responsibilities are in the field of the ship's safety, its navigation, manning, training of personnel, prevention of pollution and related legal matters, liability for compensation, and so on. But while we have a clearcut understanding I would be the last person to say that in practice everything works out quite beautifully.

When it doesn't work we get in touch with each other. Similarly we have negotiated something practical with ILO and there is an arrangement with UNEF that seems to work.

MER UNCTAD and other branches of the UN are of course bedevilled by world politics. Does that interfere with you at

all or are you free of world political problems?

SRIVASTAVA I would not wish to comment on any other UN agency but I can certainly talk about IMO. There is an absolutely excellent relationship between the developed and developing countries, North and South and also East and West. We get the cooperation we need.

MER *As you say, you have no power to enforce your conventions: how do you find your relations with governments who have to do this? Are there great differences between countries?*

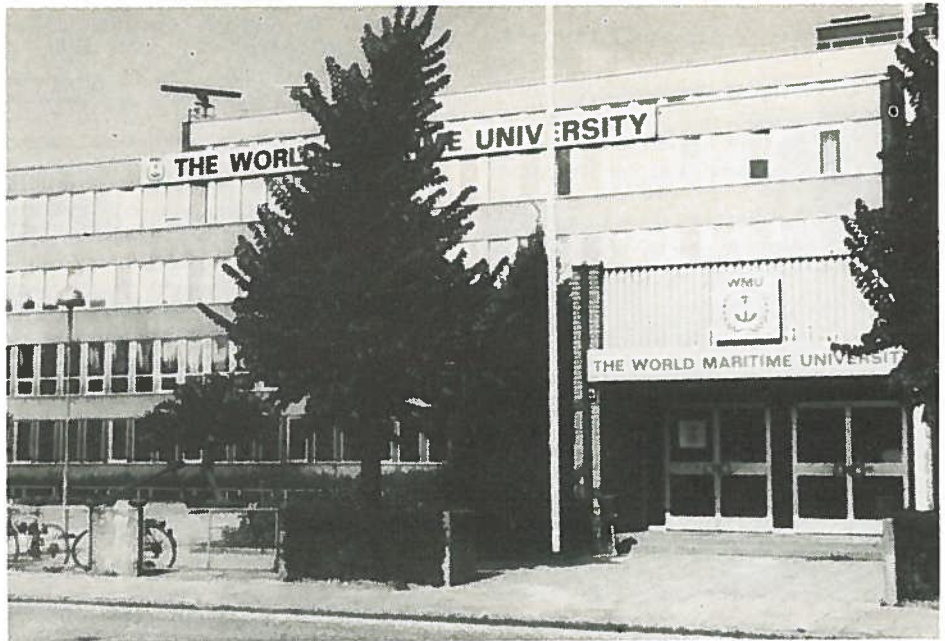
SRIVASTAVA No I would not say that, I think that acceptance depends very much on the availability of expert personnel and here there are differences between developed and developing nations. During my term of office I have visited over 70 member states, most of them developing, but quite a number developed, and not one official says his country is not interested in ratifying IMO conventions; not one.

Sometimes, there is a lack, not only of expertise but of money. Conventions require changes which cost money. People have said they need a little more time, but nobody has said they won't do it.

MER *Do you feel they will do it eventually? You don't think they're just stonewalling?*

SRIVASTAVA They want to do it and they have greatly appreciated IMO's endeavours to assist them. We have provided expert advice. We employ a number of high-level advisers who travel to member states. We have sent, in the

No matter how many rules there are, if personnel aren't trained you cannot ensure safety.



The World Maritime University in Sweden, established by IMO to provide assistance to people from member states in meeting IMO requirements.

last 8-10 years, 800 technical missions to member states at our expense. Most of the funds come from voluntary assistance by member states or from development programmes. Some member states are volunteering considerable amounts of money.

These advisers go to member states to give their recommendations on maritime training, on pollution prevention, and on modernisation, ship repairing, ship design and a variety of subjects; any conceivable technical aspect of maritime operations. All this is being done with a view to assisting them to implement IMO conventions.

We have organised many workshops

and seminars at national, regional and global levels to which we invite participants of developing and developed countries to bring them together and expose them to current thinking.

Our experts advise on training and now we have established the World Maritime University in Sweden. That is not duplicating what individual countries are doing: it is the apex of training maritime teachers. National academies are no good without good teachers.

MER *But why can't they be trained in the existing maritime educational institutions in developed countries?*

SRIVASTAVA Because nowhere is there a programme specifically designed for training people from developing countries, whose requirements are unique. The curriculum has to take into account their background, their qualifications. They need not just teachers, they need engineer surveyors, ship surveyors, casualty investigators and they need examiners. No institution in any developed country has courses for surveyors, casualty investigators or for maritime teachers.

We have now developed a two-year course for training such people and also technical managers for shipping companies and general maritime administrators.

MER *How does this differ from academies in other countries?*

SRIVASTAVA First, because there is no institution anywhere in the world which trains this category of person. Have you heard of any one? A surveyor's job is very different from marine engineering which is a basic qualification for it. What



The new IMO headquarters on London's Albert Embankment. It was opened in November 1982 and has a permanent staff of nearly 300.

we get is a chief engineer who is then trained to do a job as a surveyor.

There is no arrangement anywhere for a systematic education of this kind: and the proof of the pudding is in the eating. We have so far admitted only candidates from developing countries. There are now 136 students and we have also had a demand from developed countries. So the Board of Governors, of which I am the Chairman, very recently decided to open the University to developed countries.

And why not, let them also come. Without a very high level of technical personnel it would be hard to expect countries to implement our conventions.

MER *If I may come back to the conventions, is there a difference between countries adhering to them and enforcing them?*

SRIVASTAVA No, I don't think we have come across many cases of that kind. In any case you have not only the flag state jurisdiction but also the port state inspection and many countries are enforcing this, for instance the European Community.

MER *But I've heard it said that it has not been enforced very fiercely.*

SRIVASTAVA I personally don't agree with that. I think they have gone about it in a very wise way: you have to build this up over a period, you can't suddenly start a war. You gradually step it up. If you start in a terrific way from the first day, it might be counter-productive. If you want drama, it's one thing, if you want results it's another. I think the European states are going about it in a very wise way.

MER *Now the \$64 000 question. What happens to those who don't ratify a convention: don't they get an unfair advantage over all the others in economic terms?*

SRIVASTAVA Our aim is to promote universal ratification and implementation. As you know, our assembly has now resolved; and, without being modest, I suggested it myself; that it was time for us now to look at the problems of implementation; to consolidate for a while and assist member states in implementation of existing conventions. That is why we have the advisory services, seminars, and so on. But I repeat I do not believe that any respectable shipping company or any country as such would not implement these standards; they all wish to comply with them.

MER *Maybe I am unduly cynical but where there is so much money involved I would have thought that companies and entire countries would try and get out of complying.*

SRIVASTAVA But the lives of seafarers are important to all countries. Equally, on a practical plane, as long as you have both flag state and port state jurisdiction and control, the net is cast fairly wide. Somehow, somewhere, a substandard ship will be found out. We intend to change the substandard ship, not the flag. We have circulated a scheme to all our member states, approved by the maritime safety committee, that provides guidelines on how to recognise substandard ships and what to do about them.

MER *Don't you think you're doing too much, too quickly, since you are now slowing down on conventions and concentrating on implementation?*

SRIVASTAVA What I am saying is it is not our purpose merely to add conventions, our purpose is to enhance safety and to prevent pollution. We have the standards and we are now moving to implementation.

MER *Do you ever make an assessment of how much compliance with IMO costs the average shipping company?*

SRIVASTAVA Yes, our resolution A500 refers to what you are saying as cost-benefit analysis. When any proposal is made by a member state we urge it first to undertake a cost-benefit analysis. That is a very useful development.

MER *What do you think will be the effect of the training and watch-keeping convention on the reduction of crews? Will there be smaller though more highly trained crews, so that more people will be unemployed?*

SRIVASTAVA The effect will certainly be to improve the standard of training. The convention has just entered into force on 28 April of this year, it is too early to say what the long-term effect will be.

The number required to man a vessel will depend upon many future developments but IMO as an organisation is of the view that safety must be ensured and there should be no cost cutting at the expense of safety.

MER *Safety is not an absolute term, is it?*

SRIVASTAVA That is true, these are not absolute concepts, but safety must not be sacrificed unreasonably. One could theoretically build an unsinkable ship but the cost would be fantastic. One must have the highest practicable standards, not the highest imaginable.

MER *I presume you define 'practical' in terms of not driving more shipowners out of business; I could see them being driven out of business if the standards get too high in today's conditions.*

SRIVASTAVA Of course one cannot ignore the economic conditions but this organisation has not compromised on safety merely because it would mean more money and there is a price to be paid for safety. If something is needed, something is shown to be essential, we require it. But we do not think of something new all the time, just because we have to do something.

MER *It must be very difficult to draw a line.*

SRIVASTAVA It is not one person doing that, we have 126 member states; each is entitled to send its own representative. Some countries have very high standards others have problems but the views of all are taken into account and I can assure you that it is not by sheer voting in our organisation that something is turned down or accepted. Things are decided nearly always by consensus: by listening to each other's arguments.

MER *Still, one wonders how many companies are just on the margin of survival and go out of business because of these things.*

SRIVASTAVA Well, if a convention is universally implemented there is no relative advantage or disadvantage. It is not we who put shipowners out of business but the economic situation. However, in times of difficulty an organisation like IMO must take into account the situation.

If the times were good, perhaps we could be a little more liberal, if times are bad we have to be more careful. It's only reasonable.

MER *Since you are not going to be quite so active on safety and pollution, could you devote more attention to technical assistance to shipowners everywhere?*

SRIVASTAVA Firstly we are not going slow on safety and pollution prevention. Pushing for implementation we think is an acceleration.

Technical cooperation is the other part of our responsibility and we are doing a great deal on that. I mentioned technical assistance to developing countries in training seafarers and others including the future policy makers and administrators.

MER *But apart from training, are you involved in technical standards like, for instance, the one ISO is doing on fuel oil?*

SRIVASTAVA Well that probably would be a later development. If you are talking of research, I think the first thing is for countries to have the people who can undertake research. Technical standards, in so far as they need to be settled at global level, are being done for us by classification societies and others. As for standards of training, we are already setting them. Standards in regard to operational vessels, guidelines, codes of practise we provide.

MER *What about coordinating world newbuildings so that not too much is being built?*

SRIVASTAVA No that would be beyond our jurisdiction.

MER *It's really nobody's jurisdiction, is it? You are the International Maritime Organisation.*

Too many ships!—the situation will be eased by shipbuilders and shipowners working together. 'They will learn their lesson'. And tankers such as this are also much safer, thanks to IMO.



SRIVASTAVA This really has to be done by the market, and the shipbuilders and shipowners all working together. They will probably learn their lesson if they haven't learnt it already. Our responsibilities are well defined in the charter.

MER *What about testing and assessing equipment for ships?*

SRIVASTAVA No we don't do that. It's up to national maritime administrations. We don't go into the merits of individual products. What we do is specify a particular function that equipment must perform.

MER *Do you have good relations with educational institutions?*

SRIVASTAVA Very much so. The idea is to have a network with the World Maritime University at the apex. The University has 150 visiting professors from all countries and already 35 of them have become lecturers and they keep in touch with their own institutions.

MER *Do you feel that you could be getting more publicity in the media?*

SRIVASTAVA In the maritime press we are getting a fair amount. The national papers, however, take little notice of us. The fact is that, even in London, very few people know about our existence here. I don't think it is a reflection on us because we have no means of announcing ourselves. The television didn't even take any notice of the opening of these headquarters for the only UN agency in London, by HM The Queen. The TV people were here in full strength but

when the News came on there was nothing.

I am not complaining. We are functioning smoothly, quietly, efficiently, there is no controversy about us, no sharp statements, we are not 'newsworthy!'

MER *A pity that. What about institutions such as ours. Do you get enough collaboration from us?*

SRIVASTAVA Excellent cooperation. We are very grateful for that. Whenever we need any assistance we turn to your institutions and they always provide very good support. In fact we are very well known to them. There is no problem there. But perhaps you could help us sometime with national papers, with an occasional article on one of the specialised UN agencies which works, right here in the UK. It would be a great tribute to maritime people, a great tribute to the host country; to engineers and mariners who come to our meetings.

MER *Finally how do you see the future of the shipping industry?*

SRIVASTAVA This is not a \$64 000 it is a \$500M question. Shipping is absolutely intertwined with the general economic situation. The world has been in the throes of recession for a decade now. If the economies don't recover and cargoes don't increase, shipping will continue to shrink.

If the economies do recover then we must also hope there will be no desire to speculate and to have a mad boom. But, given world-wide recovery, I think shipping should come back into its own. I do not believe we'll see days like the early '70s for some time. That is a distant dream now.

But a better maritime industry is certainly possible.

MER *Do you think recovery could absorb all the surplus tonnage about today?*

SRIVASTAVA The surplus is largely tanker tonnage. That, of course, is in a special category. But dry cargo tonnage could be absorbed. Provided that there is genuine recovery.

MER *And how do you see the future of IMO?*

SRIVASTAVA IMO is now very well established and respected. It has been effective, it has avoided controversy and political problems, it is doing its job as it ought to be and that job will never be completed. We will continue to deal with that.

We have a very secure future.

MER *That is wonderful to hear. Thank you very much on behalf of MER readers, for a most interesting conversation.*

The present departmental system of running a ship—devised to meet very different circumstances—increasingly fails to be competitive or satisfy the needs of individual seafarers. In a paper to the IMarE Wellington, New Zealand, Branch the author put forward a system with no permanent hierarchy on board which is based only on expertise.

The matrix concept of shipboard organisation

by Kraft D'Souza CEng, MPP, FIMarE

A new North Sea oil rig was being towed to its drilling position. When on station, and in the midst of the critical mooring operation, the rig had a crew change by helicopter! With one captain departing and another arriving, who actually moored the rig? A couple of technicians from sub-contractors who happened to be aboard. This sounds unbelievable. Unfortunately it is true.

Why did it happen? Because the crew change had been planned well in advance and the helicopters scheduled accordingly. It subsequently took 10 days before the rig was able to spud in and drill.

The delay cost the company \$1 M.

The conditions of service of the seafarer have changed drastically over the years from near oppression in the days of Captain Bligh to a level which is causing serious concern in respect of sustaining its economic viability.

Generally people work to satisfy the following needs, usually in this order of priority.

- 1 physiological (hunger)
- 2 safety/security
- 3 social esteem
- 4 self esteem
- 5 self fulfilment

Unless the organisation is structured to fulfil these needs of its members, it will be unstable.

As elsewhere, the shipping industry in New Zealand is in recession, the number of ships have diminished, and only half as many people are employed at sea. The conditions for the seafarer have radically improved but the commercial outlook for the shipowner is unattractive and there is an atmosphere of uncertainty and gloom.

Shipping has been more affected by change in recent times than most other industries. For example, conventional ships have given way to specialised types; new technology is rapidly approaching with robot ships—held back only by industrial relations and lack of training.

Despite all the changes, little has been done to change the manning systems on board; the education and training of personnel; and the shipboard organisation.

The present organisation

An organisation is a means of co-ordinating effort for mutual help in achieving common goals.

The basic structure of a ship's organisation has remained unchanged from the days when the captain was king and coercive sanctions commonplace. It is based on the military model but lacks military discipline.

A strong traditional hierarchy with rigid lines of demarcation, not normally found ashore, exists on board ship. It reduces scope for social interaction and increases compartmentalism. When tensions develop, they flood the life space and are difficult to relieve, as there is no outside escape.

Since the master is the source of all authority on board and carries all the responsibility for ship and crew, the men at the bottom of the hierarchy will perceive themselves to be nonresponsible. The crew therefore are not expected to do anything beyond following instructions. But the line between being non-responsible and irresponsible is extremely fine.

This reinforces the two-class structure, ie officers and men; and results in a

caste-like division, difficult to find in organisations ashore.

The master being in overall command, he and the deck officers perceive their individual positions to be superior to the corresponding positions of the engineer officers.

But since the master is not trained in engineering, engineer officers consider him incompetent in matters relating to their profession and therefore reject his interference in them.

They also feel frustrated by the generally accepted status structure. Tensions between the two departments are therefore constant and are an impediment to smooth operation.

Effect of changes

Despite all this the present shipboard organisation worked (even though inefficiently) for the conventional cargo liner that was in general use until the 1960s. Since then massive changes in technology have substantially increased the requirement for engineering skills in all aspects of ship operation and lessened the need for the traditional skills of the deck personnel.

This has led some companies to ex-

'By removing departmental boundaries . . . skills will be better utilised'.

